

# Scouting For Boys

A Handbook for Instruction in Good  
Citizenship Through Woodcraft

*By*

LORD BADEN-POWELL OF GILWELL

Founder of the Boy Scout Movement



*"Scouts of the World — Brothers Together"*

## PREFACE

*Scouting has been described by more than one enthusiast as a revolution in education. It is not that.*

*It is merely a suggestion thrown out at a venture for a jolly outdoor recreation, which has been found to form also a practical aid to education.*

*It may be taken to be complementary to school training, and capable of filling up certain chinks unavoidable in the ordinary school curriculum. It is, in a word, a school of citizenship through woodcraft.*

*The subjects of instruction with which it fills the chinks are individual efficiency through development of— Character, Health, and Handicraft in the individual, and in Citizenship through this employment of this efficiency in Service.*

*These are applied in three grades of progressive training for Wolf Cubs, Scouts, and Rovers. Their development, as this book will show you, is mainly got through camping and backwoods activities, which are enjoyed as much by the instructor as by the boy; indeed, the instructors may aptly be termed leaders or elder brothers since they join in the fun, and the boys do the educating themselves.*

*This is perhaps why Scouting is called a revolution in education.*

*The fact is true, however, that it aims for a different point than is possible in the average school training. It aims to teach the boys how to live, not merely how to make a living. There lies a certain danger in inculcating in the individual the ambition to win prizes and scholarships, and holding up to him as success the securing of pay, position, and power, unless there is a corresponding instruction in service for others.*

*With this inculcation of self-interest into all grades of society it is scarcely surprising that we have as a result a country divided against itself, with self-seeking individuals in unscrupulous rivalry with one another for supremacy, and similarly with cliques and political parties, religious sects and social classes, all to the detriment of national interests and unity.*

*Therefore the aim of the Scout training is to replace Self with Service, to make the lads individually efficient, morally and physically, with the object of using that efficiency for the service of the community.*

*I don't mean by this the mere soldiering and sailing services; we have no military aim or practice in our movement; but I mean the ideals of service for their fellow-men. In other words, we aim for the practice of Christianity in their everyday life and dealings, and not merely the profession of its theology on Sundays.*

*The remarkable growth of the Scout movement has surprised its promoters as much as its outside sympathisers. Starting from one little camp in 1907, of which this book was the outcome, the Movement has grown and expanded automatically.*

*This points to two things: first, the attraction that Scouting has for the boys; secondly, the volume of that innate patriotism which underlies the surface among the men and women of our nation in spite of the misdirection of their education towards Self. Thousands of these form a*

*force of voluntary workers, from every grade of society, giving their time and energies for no reward other than the satisfaction of helping the boys to become good citizens.*

*The teaching is by example, and the boys are quick to learn service where they have before them this practical exposition of it on the part of their Scoutmasters. The effects of this training where it has been in competent hands have exceeded all expectation in making happy, healthy, helpful citizens.*

*The aim of these leaders has been to help not merely the promising boys, but also, and more especially, the duller boy. We want to give him some of the joy of life and at the same time some of the attributes and some of the opportunities that his better-off brother gets, so that at least he shall have his fair chance in life.*

*All countries have been quick to recognise the uses of Scouting, and have in their turn adopted and developed the training exactly on the lines given in this book.*

*As a consequence there is now a widespread brotherhood of Boy Scouts about the world numbering at present some 6,000,000 (1954) members, all working for the same ideal under the same promise and Law, all regarding each other as brothers, and getting to know each other through interchange of correspondence and personal visits on a considerable scale.*

*It needs no great imagination to foresee vast international possibilities as the outcome of this fast-growing brotherhood in the near future. This growing spirit of personal friendship and wide-minded goodwill among the future citizens of the nations behind it may not only give it that soul, but may prove a still stronger insurance against the danger of international war in the future. This may seem but a wild dream, but so would it have been a wild dream had anyone imagined forty years ago that this little book was going to result in a Brotherhood of over six million Boy Scouts to-day and a corresponding sisterhood of some three and a quarter million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.*

*But such is the case.*

*And such vision is not beyond the range of possibility, if men and women come in to take their share in the promotion of the work.*

*The co-operation of tiny sea insects has brought about the formation of coral islands. No enterprise is too big where there is goodwill and co-operation in carrying it out. Every day we are turning away boys anxious to join the Movement, because we have not the men or women to take them in hand. There is a vast reserve of loyal patriotism and Christian spirit lying dormant in our nation to-day, mainly because it sees no direct opportunity for expressing itself. Here in this joyous brotherhood there is vast opportunity open to all in a happy work that shows results under your hands and a work that is worth while because it gives every man his chance of service for his fellow-men and for God.*

*Old Socrates spoke truly when he said, "No man goeth about a more godly purpose than he who is mindful of the right upbringing not only of his own, but of other men's children."*

*B.-P.*

N.B.:The statistics on membership have been brought up-to-date (1954) and are three times as large as when B-P. last revised this preface.

## EXPLANATION OF SCOUTING

*N.B.—Sentences in italics throughout the book are addressed to Scoutmasters (instructors).*

*By the term “scouting” is meant the work and attributes of backwoodsmen, explorers, and frontiersmen.*

*In giving the elements of these to boys we supply a system of games and practices which meets their desires and instincts, and is at the same time educative.*

*From the boys’ point of view Scouting puts them into fraternity-gangs which is their natural organization, whether for games, mischief, or loafing; it gives them a smart dress and equipment; it appeals to their imagination and romance; and it engages them in an active, open-air life.*

*From the parents’ point of view it gives physical health and development; it teaches energy, resourcefulness, and handicrafts; it puts into the lad discipline, pluck, chivalry, and patriotism; in a word, it develops “character”, which is more essential than anything else to a lad for taking his way of life.*

*The principle on which Scouting works is that the boy’s ideas are studied, and he is encouraged to educate himself instead of being instructed.*

*The principle is in accord with that of the most up-to-date educationalists. The training is progressive and adapted to the changing psychology of the growing boy.*

*The Wolf Cubs, encouraged to develop themselves as individuals, mentally and physically.*

*The Boy Scouts, developing character and sense of service.*

*The Rover Scouts, for practice of the Scout Ideals of Service in their citizenship.*

*From the national point of view our aim is solely to make the rising generation into good citizens.*

*We do not interfere with the boy’s religion, of whatever form it may be, though we encourage him to practise whichever he professes.*

*Our training divides itself under four heads:—*

- 1. Individual character training in resourcefulness, observation, self-reliance to gain the Scout’s Badge.*
- 2. Handicrafts or hobbies which may help a boy to make his way in life, for which we give “Proficiency” badges.*
- 3. Physical Health, by encouraging the boy to take plenty of exercise and to look after his body.*
- 4. Service for the State, such as fire brigade, ambulance, missionary, life-saving, or other collective public duty by the troop.*

*Scouting appeals to boys of every class, and can be carried out in towns just as well as in the country.*

*When a Scoutmaster has not sufficient knowledge in any one subject he can generally get a friend who is an expert to come and give his troop the required instructions.*

*Funds must be earned by the Scouts themselves, by their work, not by begging. Various ways of making money are given in this book.*

*A Wolf Cub Pack, Scout Troop, and Rover Crew form what is called a Group under a Group Committee which co-ordinates the work of all branches.*

**Wolf Cubs.**—*The training of the Wolf Cubs is founded on the romance of the jungle, and is kept as dissimilar as possible from that of the Scouts in order that, on the one hand, the Scouts shall not feel that they are playing a “kid’s game”, while the Cubs, on their part, will look forward to the new atmosphere and novel activities they will come in for when they attain the age and qualifications for “going up” into the Scout Troop.*

*The details of the organization and training of Wolf Cubs will be found in “The Wolf Cub’s Handbook” and “Tenderpad to Second Star”*

**Rover Scouts.**—*Rover Scouts are Scouts over 17 and in exceptional cases younger. They are organized in Rover Crews in their Group.*

*The object of their institution is to complete the sequence of the Wolf Cub, Scout, and Rover.*

*The training of the Cubs and Scouts is largely a preparation for rendering Service which is consummated in practice by the Rover. Such Service in many cases takes the form of helping in the administration and training of the group. Thus the progressive cycle becomes complete from Cub to Scoutmaster. In this way the Scoutmaster, while retaining the young man under good influence at the critical time of his life, gains valuable help for himself in his work, and, in such cases as are fit for it he turns out further recruits for the ranks of the Scoutmasters, while for the nation he supplies young men trained and qualified for making good useful citizens.*

*The details of organization and training of Rovers are to be found in the Headquarters handbooklet, “Plan for Rover Scouts”, while the spirit and moral ideas are given in “Rovering to Success”*

**Girl Guides.**—*The Girl Guides’ Association is a sister organization for girls on precisely similar lines and principles, though differing of course in detail.*

*The Scout programme is applicable to other existing boy organization and has had particularly good results in schools for Deaf Mutes, the Blind, the Handicapped, Boys’ Training Schools and the Churches.*

## FOREWORD

I Was A Boy Once.

The best time I had as a boy was when I went as a sea scout with my four brothers about on the sea round the coasts of England. Not that we were real Sea Scouts, because Sea Scouts weren't invented in those days. But we had a sailing boat of our own on which we lived and cruised about, at all seasons and in all weathers, and we had a jolly good time—taking the rough with the smooth.

Then in my spare time as a schoolboy I did a good lot of scouting in the woods in the way of catching rabbits and cooking them, observing birds and tracking animals, and so on. Later on, when I got into the Army, I had endless fun big-game hunting in the jungles in India and Africa and living among the backwoodsmen in Canada. Then I got real scouting in South African campaigns.

Well, I enjoyed all this kind of life so much that I thought, "Why should not boys at home get some taste of it too?" I knew that every true red-blooded boy is keen for adventure and open-air life, and so I wrote this book to show you how it could be done.

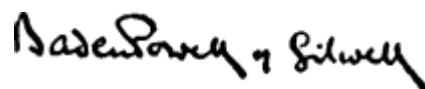
And you fellows have taken up so readily that now there are not only hundreds of thousands of Boy Scouts but over six millions about the world!

Of course, a chap can't expect to become a thorough backwoodsman all at once without learning some of the difficult arts and practices that the backwoodsman uses. If you study this book you will find tips in it showing you how to do them— and in this way you can learn for yourself instead of having a teacher to show you how.

Then, you will find that the object of becoming an able and efficient Boy Scout is not merely to give you fun and adventure but that, like the backwoodsmen, explorers, and frontiersmen whom you are following, you will be fitting yourself to help your country and to be of service to other people who may be in need of help. That is what the best men are out to do.

A true Scout is looked up to by other boys and by grownups as a fellow who can be *trusted*, a fellow who will not fail to do his duty however risky and dangerous it may be, a fellow who is jolly and cheery no matter how great the difficulty before him.

I've put into this book all that is needed to make you a good Scout of that kind. So, go ahead, read the book, practise all that it teaches you, and I hope you will have half as good a time as I have had as a Scout.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Baden Powell of Gilwell". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

*Chief Scout of the World.*

# INTRODUCTION

By LORD ROWALLAN

*Chief Scout of the British Commonwealth and Empire*

To those who are reading this new edition of *Scouting for Boys* for the first time it may be of interest to set down what information it has been possible to glean about the way in which the book was composed. Owing to the kindness of Lady Baden-Powell, B.-P.'s private diaries and letters have been read, and from these some fresh facts can be given. Another source of information is the portion of the original manuscript now in the possession of I.H.Q. The story is far from complete, but we now know much more than was available even twelve months ago.

The manuscript is on many kinds of paper and was evidently written at many times and in many places. The earliest dated portion, the yarn on "Tracking," contains one page written on notepaper addressed "Harwood, Bonchester Bridge, Hawick, N.B." (Perhaps it should be explained that "N.B." stands for "North Britain" and is an outmoded way of saying "Scotland."). The date of this is June 18, 1907. B.-P. had an amusing habit of occasionally using notepaper for his manuscripts; one page, for instance, is on Savoy Hotel paper; others are from addresses in Kensington and Newcastle.

The diary shows that actually on that date, June 18th, B.-P. was staying at the Izaak Walton Hotel, Dovedale, on a fishing holiday. The entry under June 18th is marked with a large red cross and reads, "Got 6½ brace." Then for June 19th,

"Wrote S for B most of the day—writing 9 hours."

The next date is July 15th with the entry "Wimbledon; a letter to his mother from Mill House, Wimbledon, dated July 16th, contains the following passage,

"It is perfectly delightful here, and I am getting on with my writing very well—being entirely my own master—and very quiet sitting out in the garden all day."

Nothing further is given until the diary entry of December 22nd, when B.-P. was at Middleton in Teesdale; he noted,

"Worked all morning on S for B."

One point of interest is that one of his letters to his mother (dated December 21, 1907) is on Boy Scout notepaper.

The next date is December 26th, and the diary reads,

"Went into residence at Mill House" (*i.e.* Wimbledon).

A letter to his mother dated December 30th contains this passage,

"All goes well here, I am working hard—enjoying frequent walks between whiles in this splendid air."

Though *Scouting for Boys* is not mentioned here, we know that he was then writing it because Sir Percy Everett has told us how he used to visit B.-P. at Wimbledon and discuss the book.

From the diary we learn that he left Mill House on January 6th, 1908, but there is no evidence of how far at that date the book was completed. Although publication began that month, the whole was not ready, for under the date February 24th is the note, "Sent in Part V of S for B." That is the last reference.

The manuscript suggests that Part VI gave him the most trouble; this, however, is a conjecture, since the surviving manuscript is not complete. There are three drafts for this Part—it was entitled "Notes for

Instructors; it was later called "Principles and Methods." In two of the drafts much space is given to developing the theme, "The same causes which brought about the fall of the great Roman Empire are working to-day in Great Britain." B.-P. had been deeply impressed by an anonymous pamphlet entitled "*The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*. A brief account of those causes which resulted in the destruction of our late Ally, together with a comparison between the British and Roman Empires. Appointed for use in the National Schools of Japan, Tokio, 2005." This was published in 1905. (History seems to have reversed the roles of Great Britain and Japan !). It was, as the title indicates, an imaginative account of what might happen if we did not pull up our socks. So greatly was B.-P. impressed that his first two drafts for the last part of *Scouting for Boys* were mainly on this theme and hardly touched on many of the topics he later discussed; and now it has all been condensed to a sentence. The main text of the book was not radically changed in any of the later editions revised by B.-P., but this last part he altered considerably from edition to edition.

It is important to realise that every development of Scouting has been produced on the demand of the boys themselves. B.-P. indeed never intended that *Scouting for Boys* should be other than an addition to the training already provided by the Boys' Brigade, the Y.M.C.A., and other organisations. It was the boys who got hold of the Book, formed their own Patrols and found their own Scoutmasters. It was because the sisters would not stay away that the Guides were born; the little brothers made the Wolf Cubs inevitable, and the unwillingness of those who had outgrown the Scout Troop to sever all connections with it brought in Rovering.

Once again in recent years the older boys in many places wanted more virile activities than were possible for the 11 and 12-year-old. Senior Scouts were the only answer. Many of the Courts of Honour had already banded the older boys into Patrols of their own and the new branch was merely a recognition of established fact. Scouting provides, if we use it rightly, what the boys want; not what we older people think they should want.

*Scouting for Boys* remains the basis for Scouting and the source of inspiration for Scoutmasters. When Scouting has failed it has been because we have departed from the Patrol System and have failed to trust the boys with responsibility, because we have made our Scouting too nearly a school subject and not a life of joyous adventure. Boys, particularly those who have reached adolescence, demand a challenge to their powers of mind, body and spirit. Scouting can and does provide that challenge if we use it aright. Read this book, not just once nor even twice, but constantly. Each reading will provide something new. Each reading will give us just that inspiration which we require to prevent us from becoming stale. We must recognise that through all the changes in our national life, in our educational system and our ideas of recreation, B.-P. did "know best." While minor amendments may be necessary from time to time, the fundamentals of Scouting which have produced the most universal brotherhood of youth the world has seen, remain secure as a monument to one of the greatest benefactors to mankind.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rowallan".

Chief Scout.

1951





## CHAPTER 1

# SCOUTCRAFT

### HINTS TO INSTRUCTORS

*Instruction in scouting should be given as far as possible through practices, games, and competitions.*

*Games should be organized mainly as team matches, where the patrol forms the team, and every boy is playing, none merely looking on.*

*Strict obedience to the rules to be at all times insisted on as instruction in discipline.*

*The rules given in the book as to games may be altered by Scout-masters where necessary to suit local conditions.*

*The ideas given here are merely offered as suggestions, upon which it is hoped that instructors will develop further games, competitions, and displays.*

*Several of the games given here are founded on those in Mr. Thompson Seton's "Book of Woodcraft", called "Spearing the Sturgeon" (Whale Hunt), "Quick Sight" (Spotty Face), "Spot the Rabbit", "Bang the Bear", "Hostile Spy" (Stop Thief), etc.*

*A number of non-scouting games are quoted from other sources.*

*The following is a suggestion for the distribution of the work for the first few weeks. It is merely a Suggestion and in no sense binding.*

*Remember that the boy on joining, wants to begin "Scouting" right away; so don't dull his keenness, as is so often done, by too much preliminary explanation at first. Meet his wants by games and scouting practices, and instil elementary details bit by bit afterwards as you go along.*

*N.B.—The previous paragraph was in the former editions of this book, but it was in some cases ignored by Scoutmasters, with the result that their training was a failure.*

*Remember also to start small. Six or eight carefully chosen boys will be enough to begin with, and after they have received Scout training for a month or two, they will be fit to lead and instruct fresh recruits as they are admitted.*

## FIRST EVENING

### *Indoors*

*Address the boys on 'Scoutcraft', giving a summary of the whole scheme, as in this chapter, with demonstrations or lantern slides, etc.*

*Form Patrols, and give shoulder-knots.*

## FOLLOWING DAYS

*Practical work, outdoors if possible, from the following:— Alternatives according to whether in town or country, indoors or out.*

*Parade, break National Flag and salute it.*

*Scouting game: e.g., "Scout Meets Scout" (see page 47).*

*Practise salutes, signs, patrol calls, scouts' chorus, etc.*

*Practise making scout-signs on ground.*

*Tie knots.*

*Make ration bags, leather buttons, etc*

*Self-measurement by each Scout of span, cubit, finger, joint, stride, etc. (see page 105).*

*Send out scouts independently or in pairs to do a "good turn", to return and report how they have done it (page 23).*

*March out the Patrol to see the neighbourhood.*

*Make them note direction of starting by 'compass, wind, and sun (see pages 64-72).*

*Notice and question them on details seen, explain "land marks", etc. (see page 65).*

*Practise Scout's pace (see page 63).*

*Judge distances (see page 106).*

*Play a Scouting Wide Game (see "Games", page 181).*

*Or indoors if wet—"Ju Jitsu", "Scouts' War Dance", Boxing, Scouts' Chorus and Rally, etc.*

*Camp Fire Yarns from this book or from books recommended.*

*Or rehearse a Scout play, or hold Debate, Kim's Game, etc.*

*Patrols to continue practice in these throughout the week in their own time or under the Scoutmaster, with final games or exercises on the following Saturday afternoon.*

*If more evenings than one are available in the week one of the subjects might be taken in turn more fully each evening and rehearsals carried out of a display.*